

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Please cancel claim(s) 1-11 without prejudice.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (New) An electrical connector comprising:

 a housing;

 electrical contacts mounted to the housing; and

a protection member connected to the housing, wherein the electrical contacts extend through openings in the protection member, wherein the protection member is located in a cavity inside the housing and has a lateral side which is directly snap-lock mounted to an inward facing side of the housing in the cavity.

13. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 12 wherein the protection member comprises a support lattice.

14. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 13 wherein the protection member comprises top projections extending from the support lattice.

15. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 14 wherein the projections are located at each of the openings.

16. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 15 wherein the electrical contacts do not extend above the top projections.

17. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 15 wherein the protection member comprises four of the projections at each of the openings.

18. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 14 wherein the projections each comprise a central portion and two side portions, and wherein the side portions are located at opposite sides of the central portion and at opposite respective ends of the central portion.

19. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 18 wherein each central portion has a top side which comprises longitudinal

sections with two of the longitudinal sections being sloped away from a central one of the longitudinal sections.

20. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 18 wherein the side portions comprise chamfered portions.

21. (New) An electrical connector comprising:

a housing;

electrical contacts mounted to the housing; and

a protection member connected to the housing, wherein the protection member comprises a support lattice with openings through the support lattice, and wherein the electrical contacts extend through the openings and do not extend above a top of the protection member.

22. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 21 wherein the protection member comprises top projections extending from the support lattice.

23. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 22 wherein the projections are located at each of the openings.

24. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 23 wherein the protection member comprises four of the projections at each of the openings.

25. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 22 wherein the projections each comprise a central portion and two side portions, and wherein the side portions are located at opposite sides of the central portion and at opposite respective ends of the central portion.

26. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 25 wherein each central portion has a top side which comprises longitudinal sections with two of the longitudinal sections being sloped away from a central one of the longitudinal sections.

27. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 25 wherein the side portions comprise chamfered portions.

28. (New) An electrical connector comprising:

a housing having a cavity;

electrical contacts mounted to the housing; and

a protection member connected to the housing inside the cavity, the protection member comprising a plurality of openings into which the electrical contacts extend, wherein a stationary connection is provided between the protection member and the receptacle housing inside the cavity, wherein the protection member comprises upper spaced projections adjacent each of the openings, and wherein the upper projections are located at least partially between the openings.

29. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 28 wherein the stationary connection comprises a snap lock connection between the protection member and the receptacle housing inside the cavity.

30. (New) An electrical density connector as in claim 29 wherein the snap lock connection comprises a snap lock connection between an outer side edge of the protection member and an inner side of at least one lateral wall of the housing.

31. (New) An electrical connector comprising:

a housing;

electrical contacts mounted to the housing; and

a protection member connected to the housing, wherein the protection member comprises a support and a plurality of projections extending upward from the support, wherein the support comprises openings therethrough, wherein the electrical contacts extend through the openings, wherein the projections each comprise a central portion and two side portions extending outward from the central portion, and wherein the side portions are located at opposite sides of the central portion and at opposite respective ends of the central portion.

32. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the protection member is located in a cavity inside the housing and has a lateral side which is directly snap-lock mounted to an inward facing side of the housing in the cavity.

33. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the projections are located at each of the openings.

34. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 33 wherein the protection member comprises four of the projections at each of the openings.

35. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the electrical contacts do not extend above the projections.

36. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the electrical contacts deflect upon insertion of corresponding

male contacts of a plug and the openings are configured to permit full operation and deflection of the electrical contacts to receive the male contacts.

37. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the protection member is located in a cavity inside the housing and a snap-lock connection is provided between the protection member and the housing comprises a tab and a recess on the protection member and an inward facing side of a lateral wall of the housing which are snap fit with each other.

38. (New) An electrical connector assembly comprising:

a receptacle electrical connector comprising the electrical connector as in claim 31, wherein the electrical contacts comprise female contacts; and

a mating electrical connector comprising:

a plug housing having a base wall and at least one lateral wall defining a cavity, the lateral wall of the plug housing being configured to receive a lateral wall of the housing of the receptacle electrical connector in a nested configuration;

a high density array of male electrical contacts arranged in the plug housing cavity, the male contacts being supported in the base wall of the plug housing and extending unsupported above the base wall to a desired height;

wherein the male contacts are engaged by the female contacts.

39. (New) An electrical connector as in claim 31 wherein the openings in the protection member comprise a general "S" shape.

40. (New) A method of assembling an electrical connector comprising:

inserting a plurality of electrical contacts into a housing, the electrical contacts each having a first end extending into a common main cavity of the housing;

locating solder balls attached to second ends of the contacts into pockets in the housing;

inserting a protective member into the main cavity of the housing, wherein the first ends of the contacts extend into openings in the protective member and do not extend above a top of the protective member; and

stationarily attaching the protective member to the housing directly inside the main cavity.